

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12 HA-05 MCT-01 IO-13  
EB-08 /113 W

-----127675 250352Z /70

P R 250300Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9138  
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
USLO PEKING  
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0374

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1, 4 DIMPTD  
TAGS: PEPR SHUM PROP MOPS MMOL EAID ECON VM UR CB CH US FR  
SUBJECT: VIENTIANE DIPLOMAT REPORTS SRV ORGANIZING ANTI-GDK KHMER  
ELEMENTS; OFFERS IMPRESSIONS OF VISIT TO SRV

SUMMARY: A RELIABLE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE VIENTIANE-BASED  
DIPLOMAT WHO RECENTLY RETURNED FROM A TOUR OF VIET NAM  
PROVIDED US WITH INFORMATION AND IMPRESSIONS GATHERED  
DURING HIS VISIT, REGARDING: 1) VIETNAMESE RECRUITING  
AND TRAINING OF KHMER FOR ANTI-GDK OPERATIONS INSIDE  
KAMPUCHEA; 2) THE DISMAL STATE OF THE VIETNAMESE ECONOMY  
AND SRV BUREAUCRACY; 3) POPULAR DISSATISFACTION WITH  
HANOI RULE IN SOUTHERN VIET NAM ; 4) ATTITUDES TOWARD  
THE US AND THE USSR IN THE SOUTH; AND 5) THE CONDITION  
OF SRV-CAPTURED US MILITARY AIRCRAFT. END SUMMARY.

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1. ACCORDING TO A RELIABLE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE VIENTIANE  
BASED DIPLOMAT WHO VISITED VIET NAM IN MARCH, "FRANCO-  
PHONE KHMER" AMONG THE KHMER REFUGEE COMMUNITY IN THE  
SRV TOLD FRENCH OFFICIALS IN HO CHI MINH CITY THAT THE  
SRV WAS RECRUITING PERSONS WITH MILITARY BACKGROUNDS  
FROM AMONG THE KHMER REFUGEE POPULATION IN THE SRV AND  
FROM AMONG THE KHMER KROME FOR SPECIAL MILITARY TRAIN-

ING. ACCORDING TO THESE REPORTS, THE SRV INTENDS TO INSERT THESE SPECIALLY TRAINED KHMER INTO KAMPUCHEA WHERE THEY ARE TO WORK FOR THE OVERTHROW OF THE "POL POT REGIME". THE DIPLOMAT SAID THAT THE REPORTS PLACED ONE KHMER TRAINING CAMP IN CENTRAL VIET NAM AND ONE IN NORTHERN VIET NAM.

2. THE DIPLOMAT DESCRIBED THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE SRV AS "LAMENTABLE" NOTING THAT THE ECONOMY WAS IN WORSE SHAPE THAN IT WAS ONE YEAR AGO. HE DESCRIBED THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN VIETNAM AS ONE OF IMMOBILITY AND TORPOR, RESULTING FROM BUREAUCRATIC CONFUSION. ILLUSTRATING HIS POINT, HE REPORTED THAT ONE BICYCLE FACTORY HE VISITED HAD A TREMENDOUS INVENTORY OF WHEELS BUT NO BICYCLE FRAMES. HE ALSO REPORTED THAT PLANS FOR A FRENCH-VIETNAMESE \$10 MILLION STEEL MILL WERE ABRUPTLY CANCELLED BY THE SRV AFTER THE EXPENDITURE OF \$140,000 IN PREPARATORY FRENCH GOVERNMENT/BUSINESS FUNDS.

3. HE SAID THAT CORRUPTION IN SOUTHERN VIET NAM WAS ENDEMIC. BRIBES WERE NECESSARY TO GET ANYTHING DONE. THE AUTHORITIES EVEN HAD A RACKET WHEREBY FOR PAYMENT BOATS AND EVEN OFFICIAL ESCORTS COULD BE OBTAINED FOR THOSE WISHING TO ESCAPE THE SRV BY SEA.

4. ACCORDING TO THE DIPLOMAT, POPULAR DISSATISFACTION  
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WITH THE SRV ADMINISTRATION WAS WIDESPREAD. HE SAID THAT VIETNAMESE CONTINUALLY WERE STOPPED, QUESTIONED BY THE POLICE, REQUIRED TO ENGAGE IN SELF CRITICISM AND MADE TO DENOUNCE THEIR FELLOW CITIZENS. HE SAID THAT THERE WERE 150,000 IN PRISON CAMPS IN CENTRAL AND NORTHERN VIET NAM. SRV OFFICIALS IN HO CHI MINH CITY REPORTEDLY HAVE TRIED TO EXPLAIN CHRONIC FOOD SHORTAGES IN THE SOUTH AS BEING THE RESULT OF PRC REQUIREMENTS THAT THE SRV REPAY WARTIME FOOD ASSISTANCE IN KIND.

5. PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF ANIMOSITY TOWARD THE USSR AND SOVIET PERSONNEL WERE COMMON. THE DIPLOMAT SAID THAT DURING HIS VISIT TO HO CHI MINH CITY, HIS OFFICIAL GUIDES TOOK PAINS TO INDICATE TO THE PUBLIC THAT HE WAS NOT A SOVIET NATIONAL SO AS TO SPARE HIM THE PERSONAL ABUSE OFTEN METED OUT TO SOVIETS. HE SAID THAT HE ASKED SEVERAL PEOPLE WHAT THEY THOUGHT OF THE AMERICANS AND RECEIVED RESPONSES RANGING FROM INDIFFERENCE TO EXPRESSED WISHES THAT THE AMERICANS RETURN.

6. THE DIPLOMAT SAID THAT HE SAW LARGE NUMBERS OF U.S. MILITARY HELICOPTERS AND FIXED WING AIRCRAFT AT TAN SON

NHUT, NHA TRANG AND DA NANG AIR BASES BUT THAT NEARLY  
ALL APPEARED TO BE UNSERVICEABLE.

7. COMMENT: SOME OF THE FLAVOR OF THE ABOVE HAS BEEN  
REPORTED BEFORE, PARTICULARLY THE ANTI-SOVIET SENTIMENT  
IN SOUTHERN VIET NAM. REPORTS OF SRV RECRUITMENT AND  
TRAINING OF KHMER PERSONNEL FOR ANTI-GDK ACTIVITY  
APPEARS TO BE NEW.

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLITICAL STABILITY, VISITS  
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**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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SUMMARY: A RELIABLE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE VIENTIAN E-B  
**TAGS:** PEPR, SHUM, PROP, MOPS, MMOL, EAID, ECON, VM, UR, CB, CH, US, FR  
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